

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8565

INFO AMCONSUL LENINGRAD

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 MOSCOW 336

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PFOR, UR, US

SUBJECT: SOVIET JEWISH EMIGRATION FOR 1975

SUMMARY. IN 1975 13,209 JEWS RECEIVED EXIT VISAS FOR ISRAEL. THIS NUMBER IS ABOUT 35 PERCENT DOWN FROM 1974 AND 62 PERCENT BELOW 1973. IN ADDITION ROUGHLY HALF OF THE 1,162 EMIGRANTS WITH EXIT VISAS FOR THE U.S.A. WERE JEWS. BUREAUCRATIC HARRASSMENT OF WOULD-BE EMIGRANTS REMAINS ROUGHLY CONSTANT, NO PROMINENT JEWISH "REFUSENIKS" HAVE BEEN ALLOWED TO LEAVE AND THE EFFECTS ON JEWISH EMIGRATION OF THE HELSINKI CSCE AGREEMENT HAS BEEN NEGLIGIBLE. MOSCOW'S JEWS EXPECT NO CHANGE AT LEAST UNTIL AFTER THE PARTY CONGRESS SCHEDULED FOR FEBRUARY
END SUMMARY.

2. IN 1975, 13,209 EXIT VISAS WERE GRANTED FOR JEWS TO GO TO ISRAEL. THE NUMBER COMPARES WITH 20,200 IN 1974 AND 34,780 IN 1973. IN PERCENTAGE TERMS EMIGRATION IS DOWN 35 PERCENT AS COMPARED TO 1974 AND 62 PERCENT COMPARED TO 1973.

3. THE NUMBER OF SOVIETS RECEIVING EXIT PERMISSION FOR THE U.S. IN 1975 AGAIN INCREASED, AS IT HAS IN EVERY YEAR SINCE 1970. EMBASSY ISSUED 225 IVS AND COMPLETED MOSCOW PROCESSING OF 937 CONDITIONAL IMMIGRANTS FOR A TOTAL OF 1,162. THE DISTRIBUTION
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OF EMIGRANTS TO THE U.S. BY NATIONALITY, HOWEVER,

CHANGED SIGNIFICANTLY IN 1975. ARMENIANS NOW COMPRISE 39.1 PERCENT OF THE TOTAL WHILE THE PERCENTAGE OF JEWISH IMMIGRANTS DROPPED TO 50.3 PERCENT FROM 61.02 PERCENT IN 1974, OR FROM 622 TO 585.

4. A GRAPH OF MONTHLY EXIT VISAS FOR ISRAEL FOR EACH OF THE THREE YEARS IS SIMILAR IN SHAPE, HOWEVER, SHOWING RISING TREND WITH MONTH TO MONTH FLUCTUATIONS TO OCTOBER AND THEN DECLINING. 1,460 VISAS WERE GRANTED IN OCTOBER OF THIS YEAR, FOR EXAMPLE, MORE THAN 10 PERCENT OF THE 1975 TOTAL.

5. JEWS WHO RECEIVED EXIT PERMISSION IN 1975 HAVE TENDED TO COME FROM ODESSA, THE BALTIC STATES AND THE WESTERN UKRAINE AS WELL AS FROM THE CAUCASUS AND CENTRAL ASIA.

6. EMIGRATION FROM THE THREE LARGEST SOVIET CITIES (MOSCOW, LENINGRAD AND KIEV), WHICH ALSO HAVE THE LARGEST JEWISH COMMUNITIES, HAS REMAINED EXTREMELY LOW. TO OUR KNOWLEDGE NONE OF THE PROMINENT MUSCOVITE REFUSENIKS WAS GRANTED EXIT PERMISSION IN 1975. MANY HAVE REAPPLIED DURING 1975, BUT WE ARE AWARE OF ONLY ONE CASE IN WHICH ANY HOPE WAS EXPRESSED FOR A FAVORABLE EARLY RESOLUTION. IN ONE PROMINENT CASE, THAT OF BENJAMIN LEVICH, SOVIET AUTHORITIES CLEARLY WENT BACK ON A PREVIOUS AGREEMENT TO ALLOW EMIGRATION.

7. BUREAUCRATIC HARRASSMENT OF JEWISH APPLICANTS FOR EMIGRATION APPEARS TO HAVE REMAINED AT APPROXIMATELY THE SAME LEVEL AS IN EARLIER YEARS. IT IS DIFFICULT TO DISCERN A CLEAR PATTERNS OF KGB/OVIR ACTIVITIES IN THIS FIELD. FOR INSTANCE, THOSE WHO PARTICIPATED IN THE RECENT LENIN LIBRARY DEMONSTRATION HAVE NOT THUS FAR BEEN HARRASSED, AND NEITHER HAVE THOSE PREVENTED FROM DOING SO. (SEE 75 MOSCOW 18413 AND 18450). MRS. PINSON, MOTHER OF ONE OF THOSE CONVICTED IN THE LENINGRAD HIJACKING TRIAL, HAS TWICE IN RECENT MONTHS COME TO MOSCOW TO STAGE ONE-WOMAN DEMONSTRATIONS IN FRONT OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE HEAD-QUARTERS AND ON BOTH OCCASIONS REPORTEDLY WAS TREATED POLITELY BY THE KGB (SEE 75 MOSCOW 15084). ON THE OTHER

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HAND, SCULPTOR ERNST NEIZVESTNIY HAS BEEN THE TARGET OF CONTINUAL PETTY HARRASSMENTS (75 MOSCOW 12399). SIMILARLY, SEVERAL MEMBERS OF THE "SUNDAY SEMINAR" GROUP HAVE RECENTLY BEEN CALLED IN FOR EXTENSIVE INTERROGATIONS FOR NO APPARENT REASON AND HAVE BEEN KEPT UNDER OSTENTATIOUS AND UNPLEASANT SURVEILLANCE.

8. CONDITIONS IN PROVINCIAL CITIES ARE WORSE THAN

THOSE IN MOSCOW AND LOCAL AUTHORITIES THERE APPEAR TO BE PREPARED TO ACT MUCH MORE DECISIELY AGAINST THE JEWS THAN IS THE CASE IN MOSCOW (MOSCOW A-04). THERE HAVE BEEN CONVICTIONS IN THE LAST SIX MONTHS OF JEWISH DISSIDENTS IN SEVERAL CITIES CONTAINING LARGE JEWISH MINORITIES.

9. WITH REGARD TO THE EMIGRATION TO THE U.S., IT IS IMPOSSIBLE FOR US TO DETERMINE HOW MANY SOVIETS ARE CURRENTLY APPLYING FOR EXIT PERMISSION TO THE U.S. SINCE AMERICAN "VYZOV'S" DO NOT MOVE THROUGH U.S. GOVERNMENT CHANNELS. TO JUDGE BY THE RELATIVELY LOW NUMBER OF RESOLUTIONS OF CASES LISTED IN REP LIST 17, THE REFUSAL RATE SEEMS NOT TO HAVE BEEN REDUCED. ONLY 16 OF THE CASES ON THAT LIST HAVE BEEN RESOLVED SINCE ITS PRESENTATION ON AUGUST 18. ALTHOUGH MANY ISRAELI "VYZOV'S" ARE FORWARDED THROUGH DUTCH EMBASSY HERE, IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO DETERMINE HOW MANY HOLDERS OF VALID VYZOV'S FORMALLY APPLY, IN FACT, THE RATE OF APPLICATION FOR ISRAEL MAY WELL BE DOWN AS SOVIET AUTHORITIES CONTINUALLY ASSERT. MANY HOLDERS OF "VYZOV'S" REQUEST DUTCH EMBASSY TO EXTEND THEM (A PROCESS THAT CAN SOMETIMES BE ACCOMPLISHED WITHOUT SOVIET AUTHORITIES BEING ALERTED). ACCORDING TO THE NETHERLANDS EMBASSY OFFICER IN CHARGE OF ISRAELI EMIGRATION, THE NATIONWIDE RATE OF REFUSALS PROBABLY CONTINUES TO BE HIGH SINCE HE RECEIVED MANY COMPLAINTS OF REFUSALS AND REQUESTS FOR ASSISTANCE.

10. THE PROGNOSIS AS OUTLINED BY OUT JEWISH SOURCES SEEMS BLEAK, AT LEAST FOR THE SHORT TERM. THERE IS A GENERAL CONSENSUS THAT NO FAVORABLE DEVELOPMENTS CAN BE EXPECTED AT LEAST UNTIL AFTER THE PARTY CONGRESS HAS

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TAKEN PLACE AND THE RESULTS OF ANY DECISIONS TAKEN THERE HAVE PERCOLATED THROUGH THE VARIOUS LEVELS OF THE SOVIET BUREAUCRACY. MOST OF OUR SOURCES FEEL THE PERIOD BETWEEN NOW AND THE CONGRESS IS LIKELY TO BE MARKED BY ACTS OF MINOR HARRASSMENT AND GENERAL BLOODY-MINDEDNESS AS LOWER LEVEL ANTI-SEMITIC OFFICIALS FEEL THEMSELVES FREER TO INDULGE THEIR PREJUDICES.

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 MOSCOW 0336

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11. FOR THE LONGER TERM, JEWISH SOURCES PROFESS GLOOM. THEY EXPECT THAT AT BEST THE DETERIORATION IN THEIR SITUATION WILL CONTINUE TO FOLLOW THE DOWNWARD PATH THAT HAS MARKED IT FOR THE LAST YEAR. OUR SOURCES DO NOT SEE AS LIKELY ANY CHANGES RESULTING FROM THE PARTY CONGRESS THAT WILL ENCOURAGE THE SOVIET LEADERSHIP TO TAKE DECISIONS SUBSTANTIALLY TO INCREASE THE LEVELS OF JEWISH EMIGRATION OR TO DECREASE HARRASSMENT.

12. OUR JEWISH SOURCES NOTE THAT THE RESERVOIR OF RURAL, UNEDUCATED, UNSOPHISTICATED JEWS (MOSTLY FROM THE CAUCASUS AND CENTRAL ASIA) WHO ARE INTERESTED IN EMIGRATING -- IS PROBABLY RUNNING DRY. IT IS FROM THESE GROUPS THAT THE VAST MAJORITY OF EMIGRANTS HAS COME. OUR SOURCES BELIEVE THAT IT IS POLITICALLY AND ECONOMICALLY LESS PAINFUL FOR THE AUTHORITIES TO ALLOW SUCH JEWS TO LEAVE THAN IT IS TO ALLOW URBAN, SOPHISTICATED, HIGHLY EDUCATED PROFESSIONALS TO EMIGRATE.

13. SOVIET JEWS THUS SEE INCREASED EMIGRATION OF THE MUSCOVITE AND OTHER URBAN JEWS AS THE LITMUS TEST BY WHICH SOVIET BEHAVIOR IN THIS AREA SHOULD BE JUDGED. OPINIONS VARY AS TO WHY SO FEW MUSCIVITE JEWS HAVE BEEN ALLOWED TO LEAVE. MANY OF OUR SOURCES TAKE THE POSITION THAT SINCE THE POLICE KNOW THEM AND CAN CHECK ON THEIR CONTACTS WITH WESTERNERS, THE POLICE PREFER TO KEEP THEM HERE. OTHERS FEEL THAT THE SOVIET AUTHORITIES MAY BE AFRAID THAT LETTING

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OUT THE PRESENT CROP OF LONG TERM REFUSENIKS WILL MERELY RESULT IN A WHOLE NEW AND YOUNGER GENERATION COMING TO TAKE THEIR

PLACE. WHEN RECENTLY ASKED ABOUT THIS PHENOMENON BY VISITING U.S. COLUMNIST JOSEPH KRAFT, WELL-INFORMED SOVIET JOURNALISTS AND PRESUMED KGB OPERATIVE VICTOR LOUIS CLEARLY ATTRIBUTED ITS CAUSE TO SOVIET FEAR OF A BRAIN DRAIN, PARTICULARLY IN SCIENTIFIC AND MANAGERIAL FIELDS IF URBAN JEWS WERE ALLOWED FREE EMIGRATION.

14. COMMENT. WITH REGARD TO IMMIGRATION TO THE U.S., WE EXPECT THE STEADY BUT UNSPECTACULAR INCREASE IN THE YEARLY NUMBER OF EMIGRANTS TO CONTINUE IN 1976. THE NUMBER OF ARMENIANS RECEIVING EXIT PERMISSION FOR THE U.S. WILL PROBABLY CONTINUE TO RISE AS A PERCENTAGE OF THE TOTAL WHILE THE PERCENTAGE OF JEWS WILL PROBABLY CONTINUE TIS SLOW DECLINE.

15. IN GENERAL WE SHARE THE GLOOMY PICTURE OF THE PAST YEAR AND THE FUTURE PAINTED BY MOSCOW'S JEWISH DISSIDENT SOURCES. WE SHOULD NOTE, NEVERTHELESS, THAT IN THEIR CONVERSATIONS WITH US AND WITH VISITING AMERICANS, THESE SOURCES HAVE AN INTEREST IN PAINTING AS BLEAK A PICTURE AS POSSIBLE. THEY FEEL PSYCHOLOGICALLY HELPLESS, ALIENATED FROM THEIR SOCIETY AND FEEL THEMSELVES USELESS BECAUSE THEY ARE UNABLE TO WORK. NEVERTHELESS, WE SEE NO REASON TO DOUBT THE FUNDAMENTAL ACCURACY OF THEIR GLOOMY PROGNOSIS.

16. IN PARTICULAR, WE AGREE THAT LITTLE CAN BE EXPECTED BY WAY OF A CHANGE IN SOVIET POLICY UNTIL AFTER THE CONGRESS. SOVIET BUREAUCRACY, ALWAYS LEERY OF ASSUMING RESPONSIBILITY, WILL BE PARTICULARLY SO UNTIL AFTER THE CONGRESS HAS MET AND THE EFFECTS OF ITS "DECISIONS" HAVE BEEN ANALYZED. SIMILARLY, LIKE OUR JEWISH SOURCES, WE SEE AT THIS POINT NO REASON TO ASSUME THAT THE CONGRESS WILL RESULT IN CHANGES OF PERSONNEL OR OF BASIC POLICY THAT WILL PRESAGE A SIGNIFICANT IMPROVEMENT IN THE KREMLIN'S TREATMENT OF JEWS INTERESTED IN EMIGRATING.

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